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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PMARR](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: PLAN PATRIOTA - THE SEQUEL

Classified By: Political Counselor John S. Creamer
Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

¶1. (S) Building on the progress of Plan Patriota, Colombia's Ministry of Defense is in the process of planning its 2006-10 campaign. The outlines which follow are still tentative. Operationally the new Plan is more a natural evolution of Plan Patriota than a change of course. The COLMIL's main effort would remain in the 'Omega' area, supplemented by a joint offensive force deployed in Tolima/Huila and Narino. Greater force would be applied on the Pacific coast, key borders, coca zones, and specific FARC centers of gravity. The plan's broad goal is consolidation of territorial control via integration of COLMIL force with GOC presence and programs. End Summary.

New War Plan - Still Only a Draft

¶2. (C) On November 14, ending a first 100 days in office, Defense Minister Santos outlined his "new war plan against terrorism" to Colombia's military high command. Saying Plan Patriota had mostly run its course, he unveiled a new four-year campaign for President Uribe's second term. The Minister's main theme was of nationwide territorial control via coordinated COLMIL and GOC action, integrating military and police efforts with governance and provision of social services. "We will arrive with a definitive presence in those zones where until now we have had only a temporary presence. We will combine the use of legitimate force with social policies," he said.

¶3. (U) Santos also emphasized the more strategic deployment of professional soldiers to zones of most intense conflict, relying on conscripts to hold relatively calmer territory. To improve operational efficiency, he further announced the assignment of one colonel to each COLAR division to assess management of tactical units.

Priority Effort Areas

¶4. (S) The COLMIL's joint chief of operations (J3) Captain Juan Antonio Rairan spoke with us about the new Plan, emphasizing it was still a draft not yet reviewed by the

joint staff; he requested that we keep the information close hold. Showing a map of future priority zones, CPN Rairan said Patriota's Omega area remains the COLMIL's main effort, led by the existing joint task force. Continuity there is vital, but Rairan said the Plan would also plan for replacement of combat elements with fixed territorial brigades as areas stabilized. The offensive units would then be redeployed to more intense conflict zones or to operations against high value targets (HVTs). Despite press reports of MoD intent to dismantle joint commands (e.g. CCON-1) in favor of joint task forces (e.g. JTF-0), Rairan said that has not yet been decided.

15. (S) As a secondary effort, the draft calls for creation of a "Joint Decisive Action Force" (FCAD) of three Army mobile brigades plus Air Force and Marine elements directly under the Armed Forces Commander. The three brigades are now in training. The FAD is projected to have two areas of responsibility (AORs): Tolima / Huila, (narcotrafficking nexus and FARC leadership hideout); and Narino, key trafficking corridor bordering the Pacific and Ecuador. These AORs would be sequential, not simultaneous, but planners have not decided which would come first. The FAD's timeline is as follows: planning (to 12/06), training (to 8/07), action in first AOR (to 8/08), action in second AOR (to 8/09), and consolidation (to 8/10).

Secondary zones

16. (S) The Plan's (tentative) map also shows these priority areas:

- (a) COLAR divisional efforts -- in FARC hot zones:
 - Antioquia
 - Southern Huila
 - Putumayo
 - Montes de Maria
 - Catatumbo (N. Santander)
- (b) COLNAV interdiction bands -- now along the Pacific as well as Caribbean coast
- (c) "Special" efforts -- against FARC centers of gravity:
 - Vichada and Guania: coca production and export corridors
 - Guajira: against the FARC's 19th front
 - Canon de la Llorono (Antioquia): coca cultivation
- (d) Sealing of borders -- by dedicated border brigades:
 - Narino / Ecuador
 - Amazonas / Brazil
 - Guania / Venezuela
 - Arauca / Venezuela
 - Guajira, Cesar, N. Santander / Venezuela
 - Choco / Panama

Strategies and Tools

17. (S) When asked what specific assets and capabilities would differentiate the New War Plan from Plan Patriota, CPN Rairan listed the following:

- improved intelligence
- precision guided munitions (PGMs)
- greater operational efficiency
- mobility (especially high-altitude Black Hawks)
- Police growth in key zones, relieving armed forces
- Marine expansion in light riverine combat elements (especially along the southern Pacific Coast)

With this list CPN Rairan echoed recent comments by Vice Minister of Defense Pinzon: while a key achievement of recent years has been substantial growth in COLMIL troop strength, "it's now about quality rather than quantity." Pinzon told

us that the next phase will leverage so-called 'force multipliers' -- equipment and practices that will extract greater results from existing personnel.

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